Emily Coleman Due: 12/8/13

Sherry- Foundations of Writing Tell Final Draft

Over the course of my life, there have been people that have made an appearance but not stayed for the long hall and then there have been those that have remained and left an imprint on who I am and who l want to become. Mrs. Kenny, my kindergarten teacher, and my grandmother are two of those people. They have both been constant role models in my life and influences on my everyday decisions. They have helped me realize what I want to do in life and taught me life lessons that have helped to shape the person I have become. **“You don't have to be a person of influence to be influential. In fact, the most influential people in my life are probably not even aware of the things they've taught me.” – Scott Adams** This quote accurately describes these two people.

I was crying holding onto my mother screaming, “I don’t want to go.” This happened every morning for about three weeks. My parents knew something was wrong. I seemed to hate kindergarten. My parents found this very odd because I never used to cry when I went to preschool. My mom decided to observe my kindergarten teachers classroom one day and she noticed a child who always misbehaved. When this child would start to act out, I would go and hide in the bathroom. He would get up and scream, and throw a temper tantrum. My mom then came to the conclusion I was anxious and uncomfortable being around this situation. That is when it was decided my kindergarten class would be switched to Mrs. Kenny’s. I started to love going to school again with Mrs. Kenny as my new teacher. Things were different. I was comfortable, made new friends and was happy. Mrs. Kenny, unlike my first teacher, made sure all of the students always felt included. She would come up to us and ask us how we were doing and she always made sure I had a smile on my face. Mrs. Kenny truly cared if I was happy or not. I was excited to go to school because she made learning fun. We played games and always did creative activities such as painting picture frames and counting with blocks. One day in particular I was sitting at a circle table with two other girls, counting when she came up to me and said, “Emily, you are doing such a good job today!” She never failed to make sure we all had a good day. Mrs. Kenny then began to teach us the beginning steps to reading in kindergarten giving us a basis for the first grade. I was on a good path and happy. In first grade, students are supposed to learn how to read, however my new teacher Miss. Martin did not teach us. By the time I got to second grade my mother was concerned I had not learned how to read. She hired Mrs. Kenny, my Kindergarten teacher to tutor me and teach me how to read. Mrs. Kenny began to come to my house once a week, every week. I looked forward to our weekly sessions. She became more then a teacher to me; she became my friend. Mrs. Kenny got moved up to teach third grade so I had her as a teacher again in third grade. The tutoring stopped this year since she was my teacher again. When the third grade was over, and I moved on to fourth grade, she started tutoring me again, not because I needed the help but because I liked having her around. We started our weekly sessions again. She tutored me all the way through fifth grade.

The summer before first grade, Mrs. Kenny gave me my first birthday present, a sunflower. This symbolized to me, the growth of our relationship over the years. Each summer following Mrs. Kenny and I exchanged birthday presents. She became my role model and inspiration for becoming a teacher. Mrs. Kenny changed my life without even knowing it. She did not try to influence me; she just did it naturally by always being there and by being a constant figure in my life. There is not one specific moment that she changed my life. She made a difference everyday. It wasn't about how she taught me to read, she taught me some of life's most important lessons. She is a ginormous part of why I choose to become an Elementary Education teacher. Every year, the seniors in high school get to choose a teacher from each school in our district to receive an award of recognition called "Teacher of the Year." As a senior class we chose Mrs. Kenny. I was lucky enough to present the award to her myself. Mrs. Kenny is a teacher who has traveled throughout my childhood with me. She believed in me when I did not believe in myself. When I told Mrs. Kenny I would be attending Bloomsburg University, her face lit up with a huge smile. She looked at me and said, "My brother went there!" It was then that I knew I had made the right decision to attend Bloomsburg University because yet again she would be with me along my travels. This is one of the most important moments in my life because her influence it is a never ending cycle. When you form a strong enough bond with someone, it can last a lifetime. I just never knew that bond would be with my Kindergarten teacher.

About a month after I arrived at Bloomsburg, I started questioning my choice in major. Questions constantly ran through my head such as, “Is teaching really the right career choice for me?” or “What would I do if I did not become a teacher?” I was so unsure and could not get these thoughts off my mind. I didn’t know what to do. I thought of all the possibilities, “Business… no,” “Nursing… no,” “Digital imaging… no.” There was nothing I could see myself doing for the rest of my life. My grandmother’s voice then came into my head, she said, “Emily, you are meant to be a teacher. I know you will be an amazing educator.” As I began to remember this, I thought of all the reasons I had originally wanted to be a teacher again. All the years I have spent babysitting, the teachers that have changed my life and the experiences I have already had with helping children. All that my grandmother had to do was say those words to me and it made me become confident in my decision again. I began to get excited again about becoming a teacher and the future that lies ahead of me. I made an appointment to see my advisor and while sitting in the chair in her office, we discussed the options of concentrating in both Mathematics and English. I also made the decision that I might possibly want to go to graduates school and focus on becoming a reading specialist or teacher. This was the moment when I realized this was something I not only wanted to do, but that I needed to do. I finally was a hundred percent positive in what I wanted to do for the rest of my life and in how I could impact others lives. While sitting in that chair in my advisors office, a feeling of confidence and exhilaration came over me. I left my advisors office with a smile on my face and a plan for my future. My grandmother has and always will have such a big affect on my life and my decisions. She means everything to me, is my inspiration and I would do anything for her. My grandmother does not fully know how much she impacts my life on a day-to-day basis. She does not try to influence my decisions, she does it naturally because she means so much to me.

After hearing my grandmother’s words and realizing again that I was set in my decision to become a teacher, I began to think about my future as an educator. The moment I am looking forward to most as a teacher is making an impact in one of my student’s lives the way Mrs. Kenny and my grandmother have impacted mine. I can’t wait for the first time I influence a student and see that light bulb go off while I'm helping them. I want to be more then a teacher to my students. I would like my students to look back years later and remember that moment when I helped them with a math problem or reading a story. I want to be that teacher they always remember. Four years from now I see myself standing in my first classroom greeting all my students good morning. Looking at all of their young faces I hope to teach them that we must persevere through all of the challenges we face in life and that making decisions is not always easy but I will be by their side to help them. I want them to understand the path I took to get to where I am standing and why it is so important to me to help them. Everyone needs at least one person in their life they can constantly count on and I want my students each year to know I can be that person. I love helping people and I can't wait to wake up each day knowing something I do can make a students day. I want to wake up each morning excited to go to work and teach my students something new and go to bed confident that night knowing they learned something in school that day. Being a teacher is something I have always dreamed of. There have been plenty of moments in my life where I have questioned this dream however at the end of the day I just genuinely want to help people. I want to be the reason a student wakes up in the morning and is excited to go to school or the teacher they feel comfortable talking to if they need help. Being an influence in someone’s life is not a task we try to accomplish, it is something that happens over time with the growth of each and every strong relationship we form. Bonds with people that are close to us tend to be the people that influence us the most throughout our lives.

I believe it takes a strong and stable individual to be influential to others when they are not even aware of the impact they are making. One must truly care about someone if they are willing to put that person before themself which is exactly what Mrs. Kenny and my grandmother did for me. They must become educated about others needs and strive to help those people fulfill them. Mrs. Kenny and my grandmother have taught me what it truly means to be there for someone else and put others before ourselves. They have helped me to find what I am good at and are constantly supporting me on my way to a successful future. Influence and impact are two strong words in and of themselves, when you connect them with a relationship you have formed; they seem to become even more important.